

Seneca United Methodist Church

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www.senecaumc.org

Website

Sunday Events:
Sunday School 9:00 a.m.
Worship 10:00 a.m.

OFFICE HOURS
9 a.m. – Noon, Monday thru Friday
Pastor Zayzay's Hours 9 a.m. – Noon, Monday thru Friday

Seneca United Methodist Church
Rev. Dr. Zayzay G. Kpadeh
196 East State Road
Seneca, PA 16346

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SUM Life



June 28, 2021

Dear Friends in ministry,

I wanted to write to you once again to thank you for your generosity and your gifts to support the ministry of Seneca United Methodist Church. This spring your generosity allowed us to do several different things to spread the love of Christ in our community, the nation, and the world. The One (YAHWEH) who has called us to ministry has always reminded us from time to time to seek true and genuine faith in Jesus by paying our genuine dues to the work of God. Our tithes and offerings are essential for the support of ministry at Seneca United Methodist Church in strengthening the ministry of Christ in the world.

From your gifts and contributions, we have had the privilege to do ministry more sufficiently and efficiently this spring. Some of the many things we've been able to do include but not limited to the publication of a newsletter, the continuation of the Community Breakfast Ministry, the Family Life Ministry, the Blanket Ministry, our annual mission trip to North Carolina, and our most recent added tele-evangelistic television ministry in West Africa aimed at answering the mandate of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19) – (GO THEREFORE AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS).

In the wake of our selfless determination to strengthen ministry at Seneca UMC, we are pleased to acknowledge a successful completion of a three-day Vacation Bible School (held June 21-23) at our church bringing together more than nearly thirty children from the church and the entire community. The Vacation Bible School is the first of its kind and in person gathering bringing together children in such a considerable number since the pandemic. We are grateful for the entire Vacation Bible School Team headed by Wendy Struthers and co-assisted by Pat Winkler, and Pam Schaffer. There were many who assisted in making this vision a reality. To many of you, let me use this medium to say a big thank you. We appreciate all of you.

In the area of community and ministry engagement, we have also assisted in collaborating with many community-based organizations including but not limited to the Cub Scouts, Celebrate Recovery, The Fresh Group (Al-anon) and Alcoholics Anonymous, Child to Family Services, and many others in our community. The church has continued to serve as a source and a supportive arm of the community catering to the many needs and aspirations of people in our area. Our partnerships with many other organizations including the Mustard Seed Ministry is still an unending initiative. Our ministry engagement with the Cranberry Food Pantry is ongoing. These ministries would never have been possible without your genuine commitment and support to our collaborative ministry efforts at Seneca UMC.

With the recent relaxing of Covid 19 restrictions in many parts of the country including our state (Pennsylvania), we wish to admonish all of you to be cautious in taking all of the rightful steps in maintaining safety as we begin a new journey in adopting to what the new normal will bring. As people of faith, we admonish all to remain in prayer for a spiritual direction that will lead us on the rightful path in adjusting to the new realities of the current times. Meanwhile and on the final note, our regular mid-week Bible study is still ongoing. We have been meeting online for several months due to the unpredictable nature of the virus. We are looking forward to resuming to our regular in person Bible Study gathering again following the cessation of the pandemic.

We ask that believers join us on July 7 at our regular 7pm time for the resumption of our Mid-week Bible Study following a brief summer break. Details will be made available in our Sunday bulletin and general email prior to this date. Our regular Sunday morning Bible study is at 9:00am at the church. Please join us if you're able. We are grateful for all involved in these spiritual learning initiatives. Your tithes, gifts and offerings are essentially important in helping us to continue the work of Christ at Seneca United Methodist Church.

In Christ's Service, Pastor Zayzay

"If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."—Romans 10:9

Dear Beloved,

Another milestone is upon us. The celebration of our country's independence anniversary. Our life's journey in this country has proven time and again that God is fundamentally and foundationally a part of our way of life. From the very beginning of this nation on July 4th 1776 (18th century) to the present moment in the 21st century, our Judeo-Christian Tradition has continued to be an incredible instrument of fortitude and strength in guiding us each day as we work collectively in the building of a viable Christian nation.. As we celebrate yet another milestone—244 years of existence and sovereignty as a nation and people, it is my hope and prayer that we will continue to hold unto our Christian faith in the further strengthening of our community and nation. It is a genuine and a known fact that our Judeo-Christian faith has kept this nation as a shining example of freedom and a beacon of hope for the world, where liberty, justice, and peace have flourished for the world see over the past 244 years of independence. It is because of our Judeo-Christian Tradition, and more profoundly the blessings of the Almighty God (YAHWEH) that we have continue to shine as an illuminating example that has made us an envy of the world. As a consequence of this genuine gift of life, coupled with the blessings of God, many have gravitated to these shores from many parts of the WORLD in search of faith, freedom, tranquility and democracy. The American ideal is generous, optimistic and foundationally rooted in liberty and justice for humankind. It is fundamentally my belief that as we graduate gradually out of this pandemic, we will continue to hold onto the intrinsic and genuine faith in the transformative power of Jesus Christ in guiding and leading us to a better and greater environment for the work of the church.

Realistically, the past one and half year has been a challenging enterprise for all of us. Taking up an assignment here as your pastor in the midst of a pandemic (mid-August of 2020) has not been anything easy to do, but with the help of God and the collaborative support of many of you, we have been able to navigate the affairs of the church for the past year.

As the country gradually returns to normality, it is my hope and prayer that we will gravitate to following the call of Jesus Christ in doing the work of the church with open hearts, minds and a genuine faith rooted in the holistic believe that we are all bone and flesh committed to serving the Almighty God (2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10).

As we begin another year of ministry at the end of a very challenging year (2020), I am of the deep conviction that we will all rally around a common cause and idea in doing what God has called us to do—lifting up the cross and taking a walk of faith believing strongly that with God above our rights to prove, we shall overcome all the obstacles and challenges in the next year to do the work of ministry at Seneca United Methodist Church.

Praying and wishing you all a wonderful and joyous Independence Day. Happy July 4th!

Blessings, Pastor Zayzay

2021 Western PA United Methodist Conference Report

By Joyce Schwab

The Western PA annual conference was held in a hybrid format with a limited number meeting in person at the Erie Bayfront Convention Center Friday, June 18th evening for the ordination and commissioning service and Saturday, June 19th morning. All may view the conference online at www.wpaumc.org.

Just a few of the highlights from Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi's state of the church address:

Identified some of the difficulties that the church encountered due to the covid pandemic from the closing of some churches to how many have left the UM church to go elsewhere or perhaps nowhere.

Some have stopped ministries due to the uncertainty of the future of the UM denomination. Although not new, the resolution to the sexuality issues and perhaps the splitting of the denomination has been delayed again. The general conference is now scheduled to begin 8/29/22 in Minneapolis, MN.

Positives outcomes of the past year are that the church has had to learn how to broaden the access to church services via the internet or even broadcast over the radio for parking lot services. The church rallied to feed and offer clothing to those in need. The conference's At the Lake ministry was highlighted as well as work towards anti-racism.

Due to the departure of Bishop Jeremiah Park from the Susquehanna district, our Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi and Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball of the West Virginia conference will be covering the Susquehanna district together until the next Jurisdictional Conference at the end of 2022.

The financial report was presented by Roger White and Seth McClymonds. Eighty-five percent of the connectional monies was received. Six hundred churches met or exceeded their share. The budget for 2022 is set at 8,276,000. This is 15% lower than the highest income in 2015 of 9.7 million reflecting a 5% decrease in the number of churches. Since 2019, the formula to calculate apportionments has been based on the individual church's income and is ~ 11% of that amount.

Ed Bailey gave a report on the United Methodist Foundation of Western PA which currently has over 141 million dollars. One of the four issues being voted on by this conference was related to merge this foundation to the United Methodist Stewardship Foundation of the Susquehanna Conference for a combined amount of near 200 million that would be managed by our conference. More information of what the Foundation does is available on the website.

Bishop Cynthia gave a warning that there are people who have impersonated her and sent emails out asking for you to buy and send in gift cards or to click on a link to donate money. She states that she would never send out such an email and to please not be fooled by such a scam.

Some local appointments of interest: Jeff Bobin to Heckathorn , Ron Geilser to Grace in Oil City, Melissa Geisler to Franklin First, Tom Phillips to Rockland/ Cranberry, Denise Mains to Calvary, Dave McVay to Cherrytree/Worden Chapel/Cooperstown, Rob Wilson will be the Director of Congregational Development for Western PA, and we welcome back Zayzay Kpadeh to Seneca

COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

Seneca UMC free Community Breakfast was originally started as a community outreach service project of one of our adult Sunday School classes. Since February of 2020 it has been a collaborative effort of many members of the Seneca congregation.

Held the 3rd Saturday of each month our volunteers serve between 15 and 45 free meals consisting of breakfast meats, potato, eggs, and drinks. We have also tried to have fun each month by offering pancakes or French toast with a variety of fun fruit and syrup toppings.

The community has not only embraced the fellowship that they receive when dining together in our dining room, but we have many who love the unique drive thru that we have created for serving breakfast using the side kitchen door. We also have a lot of people who drop in the dining room to chat and then take the meals to go.

Our volunteers are always excited to gather each month to reconnect with new and familiar faces alike. We always encourage delivery of breakfasts to homebound community residents. Many of them look forward to the breakfast and a visit that they would not otherwise have.

All of the funds that are raised strictly through community support are used to purchase the next month's supplies. If you know anyone that you would like to share a meal with or deliver a meal to, stop out next month and see us.

In His Name,

David McVay

SonRock Kids Camp VBS

Coming out of a year of co-vid with masks and social distancing, we weren't sure if we would be able to have a Vacation Bible School in 2021. A dedicated group of our church family forged ahead and began planning anyway. What we accomplished was on a smaller scale by our previous standards - only three days with less grand decorations, but oh, what a wonderful time we all had!

Our theme was *SonRock Kids Camp*. We had 33 kids sign up, ranging from pre-kindergarten to sixth grade. We had all five outdoor stations: Big Rock Adventure (games), Hungry Bear Lodge (snacks), Echo Hills (singing), Craft Cabin (crafts), and Outlook Point (bible lesson).

The children learned how we are accepted by Jesus, protected by Jesus and saved by Jesus, all in a camp setting. Pastor Zayzay taught these lessons at Outlook Point and then we fished in the fish pond, threw bean bags at fears to knock them over, shouting, 'faith over fear!' and bandaged teddy bears in a camping spin on the Good Samaritan parable. Some of the kids even got sprayed with water during the story about Peter and Jesus walking on water! We also learned our bible memory verses at Outlook Point. Now everyone knows Wendy Struthers has dyscalculia after I transposed numbers on a bible verse the second night. Oops.

Maddie Keenan taught everyone the rousing theme song and had all the children dancing and doing fist bumps. She had so many fun songs with silly gestures that the youngsters really enjoyed. It was such a precious moment when I saw Debbie Stoltz joining in a song about bubbling over with Jesus' love and everyone was blowing bubbles.

Speaking of Debbie Stoltz, she joined with Debbie Weaver to provide scrumptious snacks for everyone at Hungry Bear Lodge. We enjoyed s'mores, fresh fruit kabobs, dirt pudding with worms, chips and beverages. Yum!

Nancy Horne was in charge of Craft Cabin. She had the group coloring their VBS t-shirts on Monday, making cabin picture frames on Tuesday and painting rocks with our own camping hieroglyphics on Wednesday. Pam Shaffer took pictures of the kids for the frames. Great team work!

Joyce Schwab and Andrew Ritsig sure looked like they were having fun at Big Rock Adventure. Like Joyce, many of our leaders put in a full day of work before coming to VBS in the evening. What a wonderful, dedicated church family we have!

We wish to thank all the other folks who made this year's VBS a success – Mike Schubert, Jan Sanford, Darla and Brian Creighton, Mary Kay Beers, Wendy McKain, Cindy Comiske, Nikki Berlin, Desiree Daily, Grace Kpadeh, Jessica Warner, Marlisa and Isabella Sauerland, and Janet Shaw. A special thanks to Pam Shaffer for her guidance and willingness to jump in and do whatever needed done. Thanks also to the ladies who provided the picnic after church to wrap up VBS. It bears repeating, what a wonderful church family we have!

Yours in Christ,
Wendy Struthers